

# MEDIA ADVISORY

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 21, 2006

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## **Federal, State and Local Officials to Attend Dartmouth Grange Community Kitchen Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony**

**Amherst, MA** –The Dartmouth Grange and National Grange President, William Steel will host USDA Rural Development State Director David Tuttle, Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, Douglas Gillespie, State Senator Mark Montigny, and State Representative John Quinn, at the Grange on Friday, June 23 for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of the Grange's Regional Shared-Use Community Kitchen. Guests are invited to tour the facility, enjoy live music, light refreshments, and sample food products to be produced in the facility.

The Dartmouth Grange, a part of the Dartmouth community since the 1890's, developed the Regional Shared-Use Community Kitchen project to strengthen and increase economic stability in the area. The facility, constructed by Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School students, will provide value-added development opportunities to the local agricultural community and encourage the growth and development of specialty food processing businesses that support local farm businesses. Partnerships with the University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth, Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnerships and the Northeast Center for Food Entrepreneurship will provide technical assistance to the small businesses using the kitchen.

In March, 2004 the Grange received a \$17,000 USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant to create a business plan for the shared-use kitchen and in April of this year received another Rural Business Enterprise Grant in the amount of \$46,000 for the purchase of equipment for the kitchen.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for all rural Americans. USDA Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. In Fiscal Year 2005, USDA Rural Development provided over \$58.5 million in assistance to Massachusetts' rural communities and families.

### **PHOTO/VIDEO/INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY**

**WHO:** William Steel, President of the National Grange  
State Senator Mark Montigny  
State Representative John Quinn  
USDA Rural Development State Director, David Tuttle  
Douglas Gillespie, Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources  
Sarah Kelley, Executive Director of Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership  
Susan Guiducci, Chairperson of the Dartmouth Agricultural Preservation Trust Council  
Michael Shea, Superintendent of Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School

**WHAT:** Ribbon-cutting ceremony

**WHERE:** Dartmouth Grange Hall – 1133 Fisher Road, Dartmouth, MA

**WHEN:** Friday, June 23, 2006 10:00 AM

An **Open House** will also be held at the Dartmouth Grange Regional Shared-Use Community Kitchen **on Saturday, June 24 from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM**. All are welcome.

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